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In the event a fee is required or if any additional fee during the prosecution of this application is not paid, the Patent Office is authorized to charge the underpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-2215.

CONTINGENT EXTENSION REQUEST

If this communication is filed after the shortened statutory time period had elapsed and no separate Petition is enclosed, the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks is petitioned, under 37 CFR 1.136(a), to extend the time for filing a response to the outstanding Office Action by the number of months which will avoid abandonment under 37 CFR 1.135. The fee under 37 CFR 1.17 should be charged to our Deposit Account No. 50-2215.

AMENDMENTS

In the Specification:

Please delete the following paragraph(s)/section(s)/abstract and replace such paragraph(s)/section(s)/abstract pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(b)(1)(ii) with the "clean" version attached below. Entry is respectfully requested. A version with markings to show the changes made pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(b)(1)(iii) is attached hereto as Appendix A.

Paragraph at page 2, line 18 to page 3, line 3:

Tester 61 for inspecting semiconductor devices in accordance with a test program includes a plurality of drivers 62 each for applying a predetermined signal to a terminal 65 for an input signal of semiconductor device 64 to be inspected. Each of semiconductor devices 64 has a plurality of terminals 65 each for an input signal. Tester 61 and semiconductor devices 64 are connected to each other through probe card 63. One

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driver 62 in tester 61 corresponds to one terminal 65, and therefore, a number of drivers 62 greater than the total number of input terminals 65 of the semiconductor devices 64 to be inspected are prepared.

Paragraph at page 3, line 16 to page 4, line 1:

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It is generally considered that semiconductor devices that are inspected simultaneously are of the same type. Thus, Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 11-231022 (JP, 11231022, A) discloses an apparatus wherein a signal from a driver of a tester is branched in a probe card and supplied in parallel to a plurality of semiconductor devices to be inspected simultaneously as seen from FIG. 2. A wiring scheme by which a signal from a driver is branched and supplied in parallel to a plurality of semiconductor devices is called common drive wiring, and a driver used in such common drive wiring is called a common driver.

Paragraph at page 4, line 2 to page 4, line 19:

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In the configuration shown in FIG. 2, three terminals 65a to 65c, and 65d to 65f for an input signal are respectively provided for each of a plurality of semiconductor devices 64a, 64b. The output of driver 62a from among the drivers in tester 61 is connected to terminal 65a of semiconductor device 64a, and the output of driver 62d is connected to terminal 65d of another semiconductor device 64b. However, the output of driver 62b is branched at branching point 66a in probe card 63 and supplied to terminal 65e of semiconductor device 64b. Similarly, the output of driver 62c is branched at branching point 66b in probe card 63 and supplied to terminal 65c of semiconductor device 64a and terminal 65f of semiconductor device 64b. Since the output of each of drivers 62b, 62c is branched and connected to a plurality of terminals for an input signal, drivers 62b, 62c are common drivers.
